

**BASIN ELECTRIC
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December 1, 2011

Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
Attn: STB Docket No. EP 526
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

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Dear Ms. Brown:

In response to the Board's decision in Docket No. EP 526 (Sub-No. 3), I would like to nominate Joe Leingang as a candidate for membership on the Rail Shipper Transportation Advisory Council (RSTAC). If appointed, Mr. Leingang is willing to serve for a 3-year term beginning immediately upon appointment and ending December 31, 2014.

Basin Electric is a consumer-owned rural electric cooperative and wholesale power supplier to cooperatives within the nine states of Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, and Iowa serving 2.8 million rural electric consumers. Nearly 65 percent of our power supply comes from coal-based generation facilities in North Dakota, Wyoming, and Iowa. While several of those plants are mine mouth, many rely heavily on rail shipments of coal as well as lime and limestone for the operation of emissions control systems. Without an efficient and robust rail transportation system, these facilities would not be able to provide rural consumers with reliable, affordable electricity. At the same time, we recognize that a fair and equitable system must be maintained to balance the needs of the transportation system with the needs of shippers, many of whom may be dependent on a single railroad.

Mr. Leingang's experience in the rail transportation needs of Basin Electric and its members would make him a valuable member of RSTAC. As Director of Fuel and Transportation, he handles a breadth of rail logistics issues including tariff and rate progressions, surcharges, demurrage, and rail rules promulgated by the carriers and the Association of American Railroads. He has 30 years of electric utility experience with both investor owned and public power/cooperative utilities. For 18 years, he served as the Controller and Manager of Accounting for Arizona Electric Power Cooperative and his background in financial and statistical reporting would be beneficial to the deliberations to review and revamp the Uniform Rail Costing System. He holds degrees in Business and Accounting and a MBA from North Dakota State University. Finally, he is an expert in regression analysis (critical to the URCS construct) and other multivariable methods.

I am pleased to nominate Mr. Leingang for this position and know he would make a valuable addition to RSTAC as it provides guidance to the STB on national rail policy. Thank you for your consideration of this nomination.

Sincerely,

Ronald R. Harper
CEO & General Manager